

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

Without prejudice, this listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in the present application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

1-15. (Canceled).

16. (Previously Presented) A control device comprising:

a storage device for storing an audio-output matrix having a plurality of matrix elements, each matrix element associated with a pair of audio sources from a plurality of different audio sources, including at least first, second and third matrix elements, wherein the first matrix element indicates if a first audio source can interrupt a second audio source, the second matrix element indicates if the second audio source can interrupt a third audio source, and the third matrix element indicates if the third audio source can interrupt the first audio source; and

an arrangement for outputting a selected one of the plurality of audio sources to a common output device,

wherein the control device is configured to manage audio output interruption requests from the plurality of different audio sources as a function of the matrix elements of the audio-output matrix, wherein the managing includes a non-linear mode in which, if indicated by the matrix elements, the first audio source can interrupt the second audio source, the second audio source can interrupt the third audio source, and the third audio source can interrupt the first audio source.

17. (Previously Presented) The control device as recited in Claim 16, further comprising a selection device for selecting different attributes which are assigned to the matrix elements of an audio source pair.

18. (Previously Presented) The control device as recited in Claim 17, further comprising an input device for inputting the matrix elements together with the selected attributes.

19. (Previously Presented) The control device as recited in Claim 16, further comprising a video screen.

20. (Canceled).

21. (Previously Presented) The control device as recited in Claim 16, further comprising a management device for managing the plurality of audio sources in a waiting list.

22. (Previously Presented) The control device as recited in Claim 16, wherein the common output device is at least one of a loudspeaker and a headphone.

23. (Previously Presented) A control method comprising:

storing an audio-output matrix having a plurality of matrix elements, each matrix element associated with a pair of audio sources from a plurality of different audio sources, including at least first, second and third matrix elements, wherein the first matrix element indicates if a first audio source can interrupt a second audio source, the second matrix element indicates if the second audio source can interrupt a third audio source, and the third matrix element indicates if the third audio source can interrupt the first audio source;

outputting a selected one of the plurality of audio sources to a common output device;
and

managing audio output interruption requests from the plurality of different audio sources as a function of the matrix elements of the audio-output matrix, wherein the managing includes a non-linear mode in which, if indicated by the matrix elements, the first audio source can interrupt the second audio source, the second audio source can interrupt the third audio source, and the third audio source can interrupt the first audio source.

24. (Previously Presented) The control method as recited in Claim 23, further comprising selecting different attributes of the matrix elements which are each assigned to an audio source pair.

25. (Previously Presented) The control method as recited in Claim 23, further comprising individually entering into an input device the matrix elements of the audio-output matrix.

26. (Canceled).

27. (Previously Presented) The control method as recited in Claim 23, further comprising the step of selecting, based on an attribute of a matrix element assigned to an audio source pair, between relieving and interrupting the corresponding audio source that is active longer.

28. (Previously Presented) The control method as recited in Claim 23, further comprising selecting between an abrupt transition and a smooth cross-fading between two audio sources.

29. (Previously Presented) The control method as recited in Claim 23, further comprising selecting between separating and superposing two corresponding audio sources.

30. (Previously Presented) The control method as recited in Claim 23, further comprising forming a waiting list having an order of the audio sources, using attributes of the respective matrix elements.

31. (Previously Presented) The control device of claim 16, wherein each matrix element indicates the interruption priority of a particular audio source, of the plurality of different audio sources, with respect to another audio source of the plurality of different audio sources.

32. (Canceled).

33. (Previously Presented) The control device of claim 16, wherein each matrix element includes an attribute indicating a manner of interruption of a higher priority one of the two associated audio sources with respect to a lower priority one of the two associated audio sources.

34. (Canceled).

35. (Previously Presented) The control device of claim 16, wherein the plurality of different audio sources are audio portions of a plurality of different information sources.

36. (Previously Presented) The control method of claim 23, wherein the plurality of different audio sources are audio portions of a plurality of different information sources.
37. (Previously Presented) The control device of claim 33, wherein the manner of interruption selects between a new audio source relieving a previous audio source or the new audio source temporarily interrupting the previous audio source.
38. (Previously Presented) The control device of claim 33, wherein the manner of interruption selects between an abrupt transition from a previous audio source to a new audio source or a smooth transition from the previous audio source to the new audio source.
39. (Previously Presented) The control device of claim 33, wherein the manner of interruption indicates whether a new audio source is superimposed on a previous audio source.
40. (Previously Presented) The control method of Claim 23, further comprising:
selecting different attributes of the matrix elements which are each assigned to an audio source pair;
individually entering into an input device the matrix elements of the audio-output matrix;
performing at least one of:
selecting, based on an attribute of a matrix element assigned to an audio source pair, between relieving and interrupting the corresponding audio source that is active longer;
selecting between an abrupt transition and a smooth cross-fading between two audio sources;
selecting between separating and superposing two corresponding audio sources; and
forming a waiting list having an order of the audio sources, using attributes of the respective matrix elements.

41. (Previously Presented) The control method of Claim 40, wherein each of the matrix elements includes an attribute indicating a manner of interruption of a higher priority one of the two associated audio sources with respect to a lower priority one of the two associated audio sources.